

2009-144-C

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Committees:
Medical, Military, Public and
Municipal Affairs, Chairman

House of Representatives

State of South Carolina

November 10, 2009

Mr. Charles Terreni
Chef Clerk and Administrator
Public Service Commission of SC
101 Executive Center Dr., Ste. 100
Columbia, SC 29210

Dear Mr. Terreni:

I was disappointed to hear that the South Carolina Public Service Commission (PSC) recently denied TracFone Wireless' request to provide free cellular telephones and service to poor citizens of South Carolina through the federal Lifeline program. Many thousands of eligible people in our state need more wireless access and telephones. TracFone was poised to bring this federal program to them. This is a service that costs South Carolina nothing and provides a critical communication amenity to those afflicted by poverty. Many of these people are handicapped, infirmed, aged and/or without the means to get cellular telephone service.

Ninety percent of this state's low income households do not currently receive Lifeline benefits. If they could be brought into service, the millions of federal dollars tapped would be a tremendous financial benefit for South Carolina. I need not iterate the state of the economy and how tough times are for so many of our citizens.

I hope that the PSC will see fit to accommodate this need and expand access to wireless telephones and service for low income South Carolinians. TracFone is a well-known national provider who can commit significant resources to providing this service for needy households in our state. The company has launched the services successfully all over the country. I would like to see the PSC reconsider how they can broker a solution here in South Carolina that increases critical access for our citizens while capturing the federal dollars the Lifeline program offers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Leon Howard".

Leon Howard

cc: Mr. C. Dukes Scott, Exec. Director, S.C. Office of Regulatory Staff, and
Members of Public Utilities Review Committee